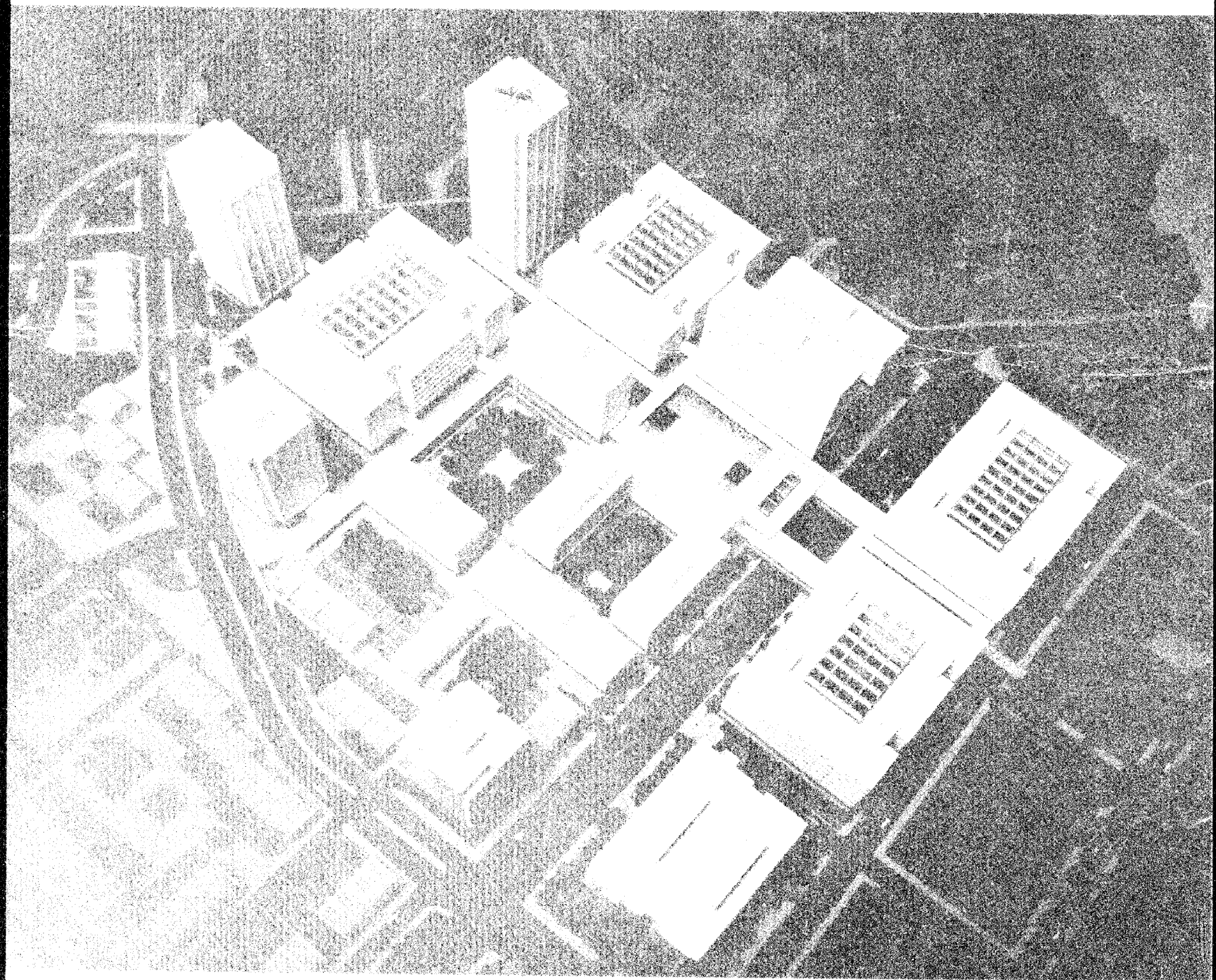


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2008



MARYLAND STATE GOVERNMENTAL CENTER



MARYLAND STATE GOVERNMENTAL CENTER

Expansion Program in the City of Baltimore

For

**STATE OF MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

XB-6-685

Prepared by

GRUEN ASSOCIATES

Architecture - Planning - Engineering
Washington DC., New York, Los Angeles

March 1969



101. Aerial view of New York City, showing the harbor and downtown.

BACKGROUND

The State of Maryland began development of the Governmental Center in Baltimore with three buildings that opened in 1956, and housed all state functions required within the city. They occupied a small part of the 18.5-acre site the State had acquired as part of the Mount Royal Plaza Urban Renewal Project, which had cleared a 44-acre slope around the Fifth Regiment Armory, about a mile north of the city center.

With the phenomenal growth of Maryland population in recent years, government services have had to expand and multiply to meet increasing needs, both social and developmental. By 1966, expanding work loads and increasing work forces were putting a strain on all government facilities, and the $\frac{3}{4}$ million square feet of space in the three State Office Buildings were crowded by a total of 63 different departments, commissions, councils, boards, and bureaus, while other departments, councils, boards, and bureaus were operating out of leased quarters in other parts of the city.

Confronted with this need for space, the State undertook studies to provide the framework for a long-range growth of facilities, so that government services could be centralized again, and future building expansion could be programmed flexibly in response to space needs. In 1966, an architectural study proposed providing for one million square feet of expansion in one 35-story tower at the Mount Royal site. On realizing the kind of impact such a building would have on the surrounding neighborhoods, made up of characteristic Baltimore row houses, the State Department of Public Improvements, in collaboration with the State Planning Department, engaged Gruen Associates, Inc. to undertake an urban design study and produce a comprehensive plan for expanding the Center that would not only accommodate governmental needs but also relate to the character and needs of the neighboring institutions and communities, as well as to the city as a whole.

Goals and Objectives

There are three basic goals to be pursued in planning this expansion program:

1. Convenient, clear access to all buildings and to the services within them
2. Physical and social integration of the complex into the community
3. A flexible method of building expansion to meet undetermined future space needs

Fulfillment of these general aims requires a set of specific objectives through which the goals may be realized. These objectives may be classed in four groups:

Among the administrative objectives, besides that of making room for all present and future State operations in Baltimore, are two major ones - to identify interdepartmental service operations that need no longer be duplicated, and recommend their centralization for increased efficiency and economy of operation; and to identify the agencies which serve large numbers of the public and program their facilities for the most accessible locations.

The chief planning objectives are provision for linkage with the community and ease of access. For the automobile, the objective is access to the complex without disruption of the city's traffic flow, and, within the complex, access by car to every building, and adequate, convenient parking space. For the pedestrian, it means safe, pleasant circulation within the complex, and links to the rapid transit station and to the neighboring communities. Within the complex, ease of movement requires a simple, coherent, understandable system of relationships between buildings, and a similar directness of plan for the buildings themselves.

The design objectives include integration into the new complex of the existing buildings, and relating the scale of the new buildings, the circulation ways, and the open spaces within the complex to the scale of the surrounding neighborhoods in a sympathetic way. Architectural and planning guidelines that will ensure continuity and coherence for the complex during its long-term growth are imperative.

There are also social objectives that are important: The design and atmosphere of the buildings and the entire complex should enhance the experience of working and doing business there, by providing efficient, dignified, and pleasant settings for all functions, particularly in the areas where the public is served. There must also be some attractions added to the governmental facilities that draw pedestrian life into the complex after the state offices are closed for the evening. Also every effort should be made to make the complex accessible, attractive, and useful to the people from the neighboring institutions and communities, as well as to the visitors who come to do business with State agencies.

This summary contains the recommendations for fulfilling these goals and objectives that form the development plan for the Maryland State Governmental Center Expansion Program. The completion of the study and preparation of the report to the State was made possible by the co-operation of the Governor's Advisory Committee and the many other organizations named inside the back cover of this book, as well as by the kindness of many individual public-spirited citizens.

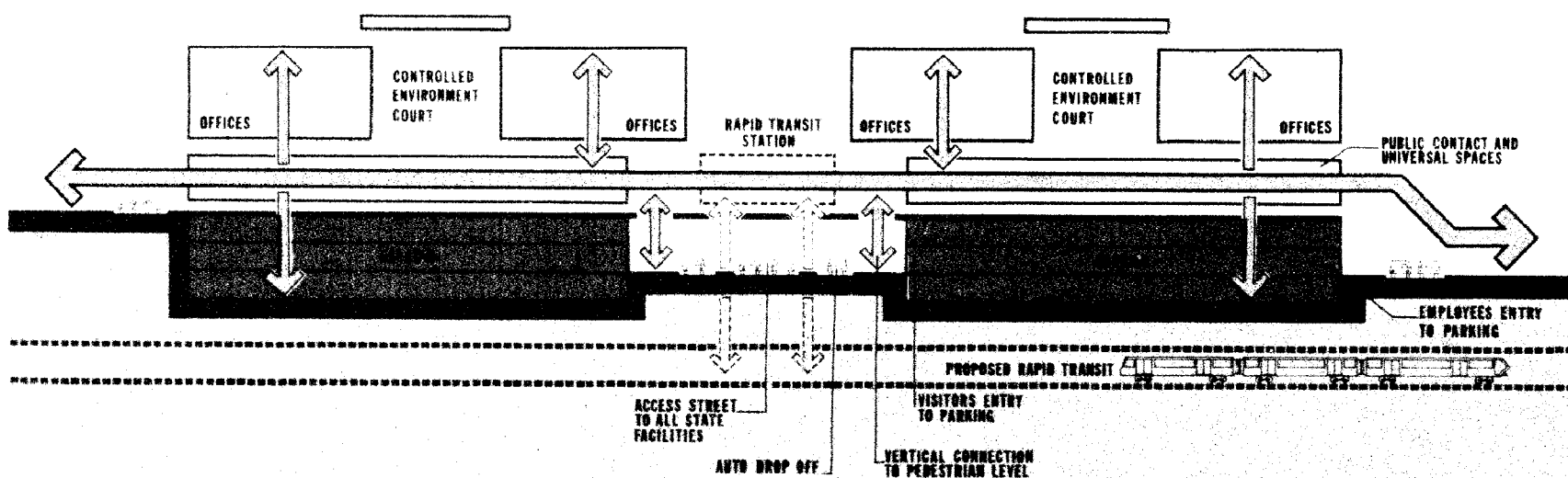
THE CONCEPT

The major principle on which the planning concept is based is the creation of two separate and distinct circulation systems, one for vehicles at street grade, the other, raised above it, for pedestrians, with vertical connections between the two. This system fulfills one of the major goals of the expansion plan, ease of circulation and clarity of access. But it also serves the other goals—flexibility of expansion, and provision of physical and social ties with the community. The pedestrian network, in combination with the focus of vehicular access along the spine of Preston Street, ties the entire complex together in such a fashion that any element of the proposed plan may be developed and become an organic part of the complex, related to the whole through the circulation system. The pedestrian system also provides physical links with the community by bridging the peripheral streets, and allows for social links in the form of community amenities and shops that will be accessible along it.

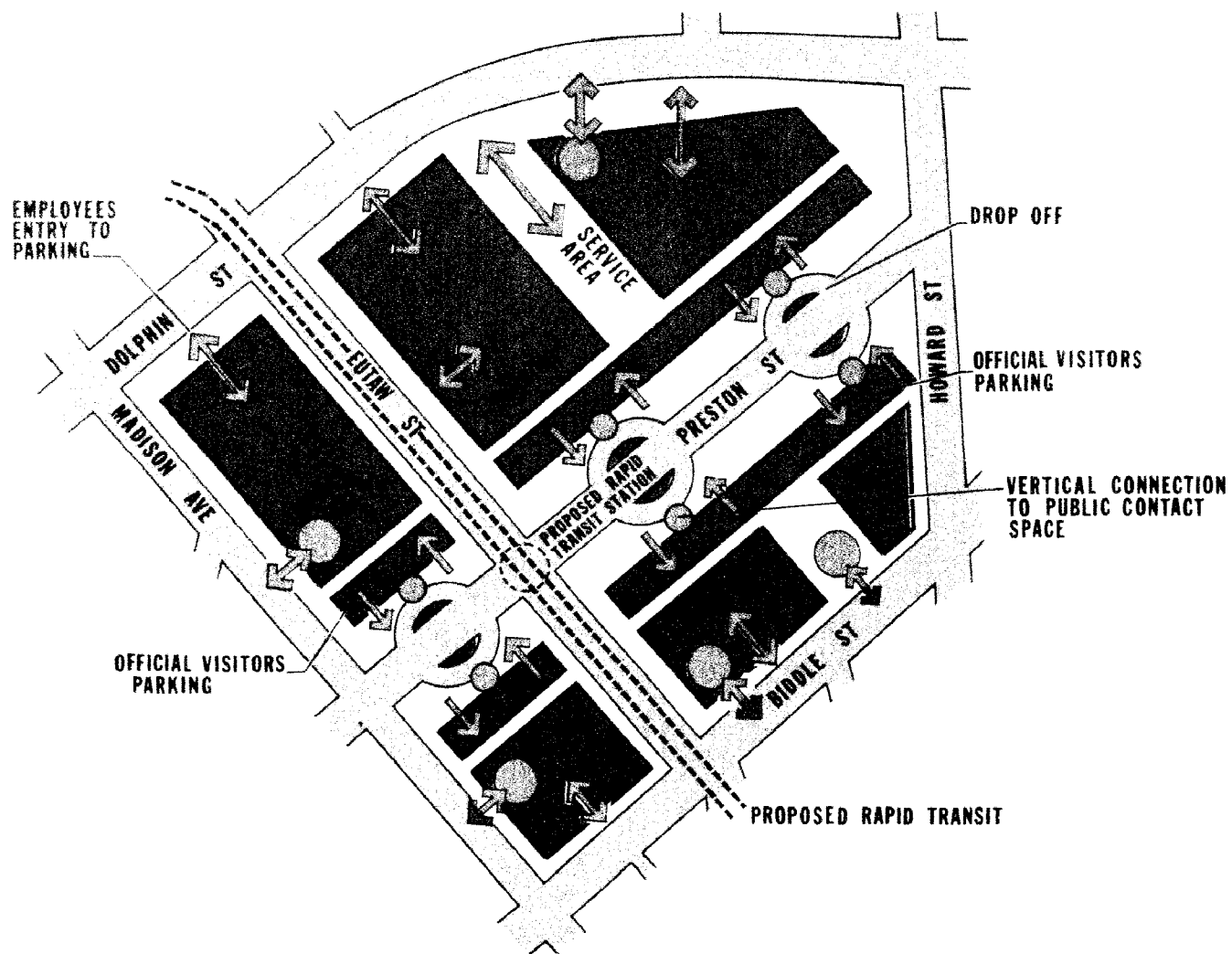
In the plan for vehicular circulation, Preston Street is designated as the main access way for cars visiting the Governmental Center. All quadrangles front on Preston Street with a passenger drop-off point and garage access at street level, from which passengers go direct to the promenade level by escalator. Preston is planned as a monumental traffic way with two moving lanes of cars in each direction, flanked by drop-off lanes that also feed the ground-level parking area under each building. This parking should be for visitors and official cars. The other two parking levels shown on the sectional

drawings, which are fed from peripheral streets, are reserved for employee parking. From these levels, employees will ride elevators direct to the office levels.

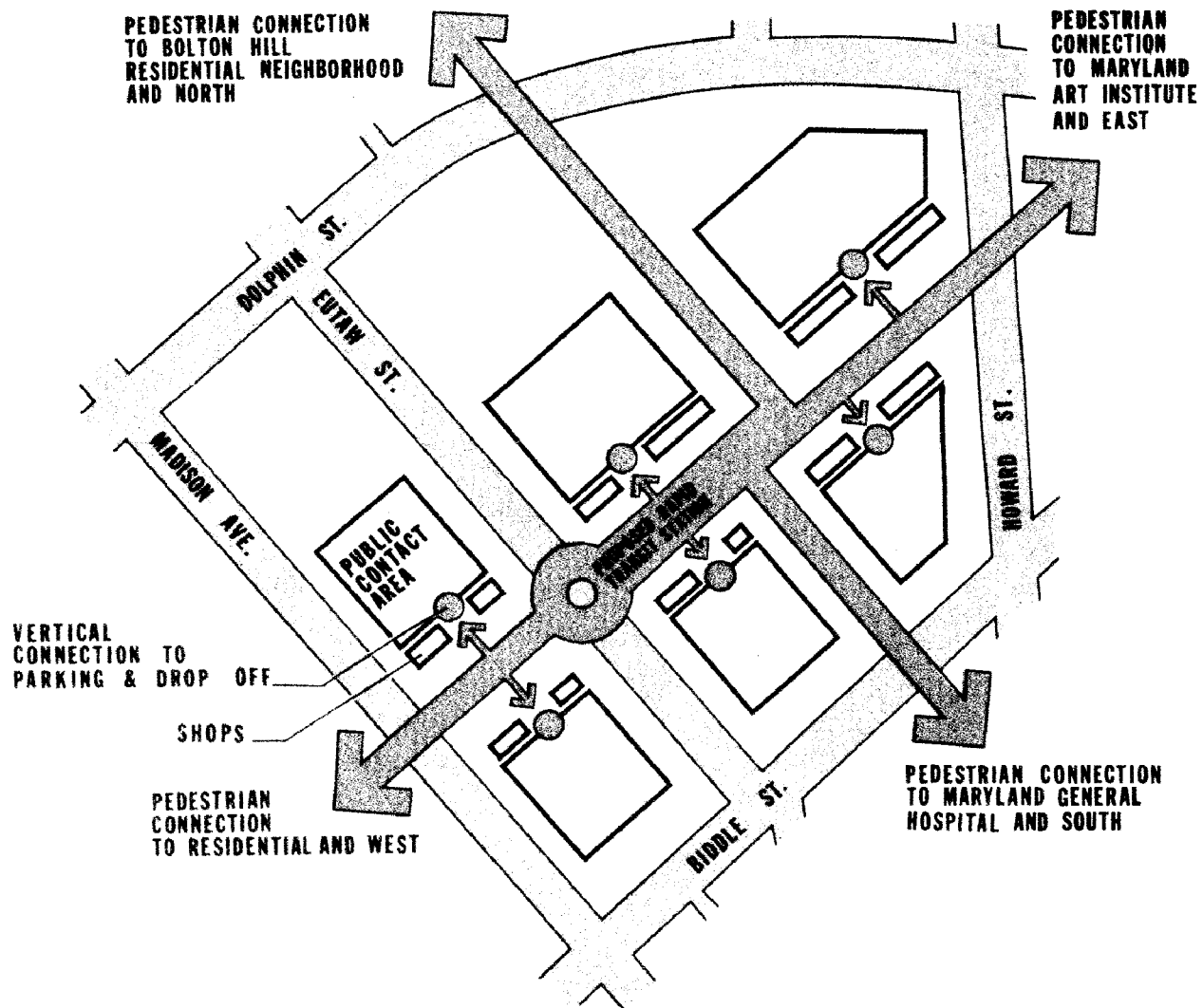
On the raised pedestrian level, people will be able to move safely and freely along the sheltered promenade and the walkways that link it to other parts of the complex and to neighboring institutions and communities. For these neighbors, the walks will provide the link to the proposed rapid transit station. The station entrance will be at the pedestrian level, connected by escalators to the underground trains. Along the promenade, beside the building entries, will be shops, perhaps a cinema, restaurants, and other such facilities. Although integrated architecturally with the government buildings, these commercial establishments must all be accessible from the promenade, so that they can continue to operate after regular office hours, and attract lively pedestrian activity to the center in the evening and on weekends. Also reached from the walkways will be playgrounds and other recreational and civic facilities that are needed by the surrounding neighborhoods and will also be enjoyed by visitors to the complex. Those government departments which have frequent contact with the public must be located directly on the pedestrian level, for the convenience of the visitors. Also located on this level, for shared use, should be all interdepartmental services, and facilities like meeting rooms, libraries, and auditoriums.



SCHEMATIC SECTION



VEHICULAR CIRCULATION AND PARKING



PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

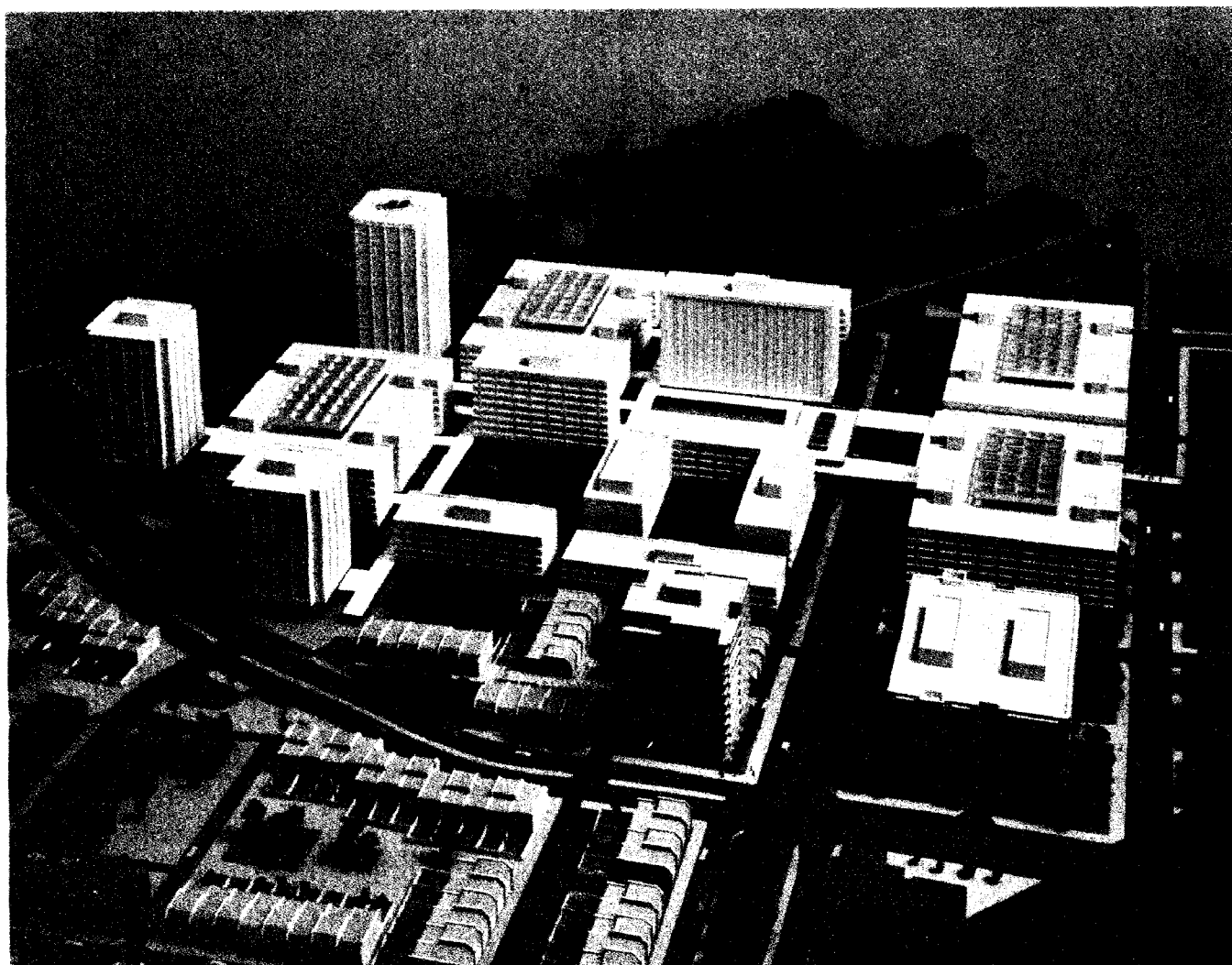
SITE PLAN

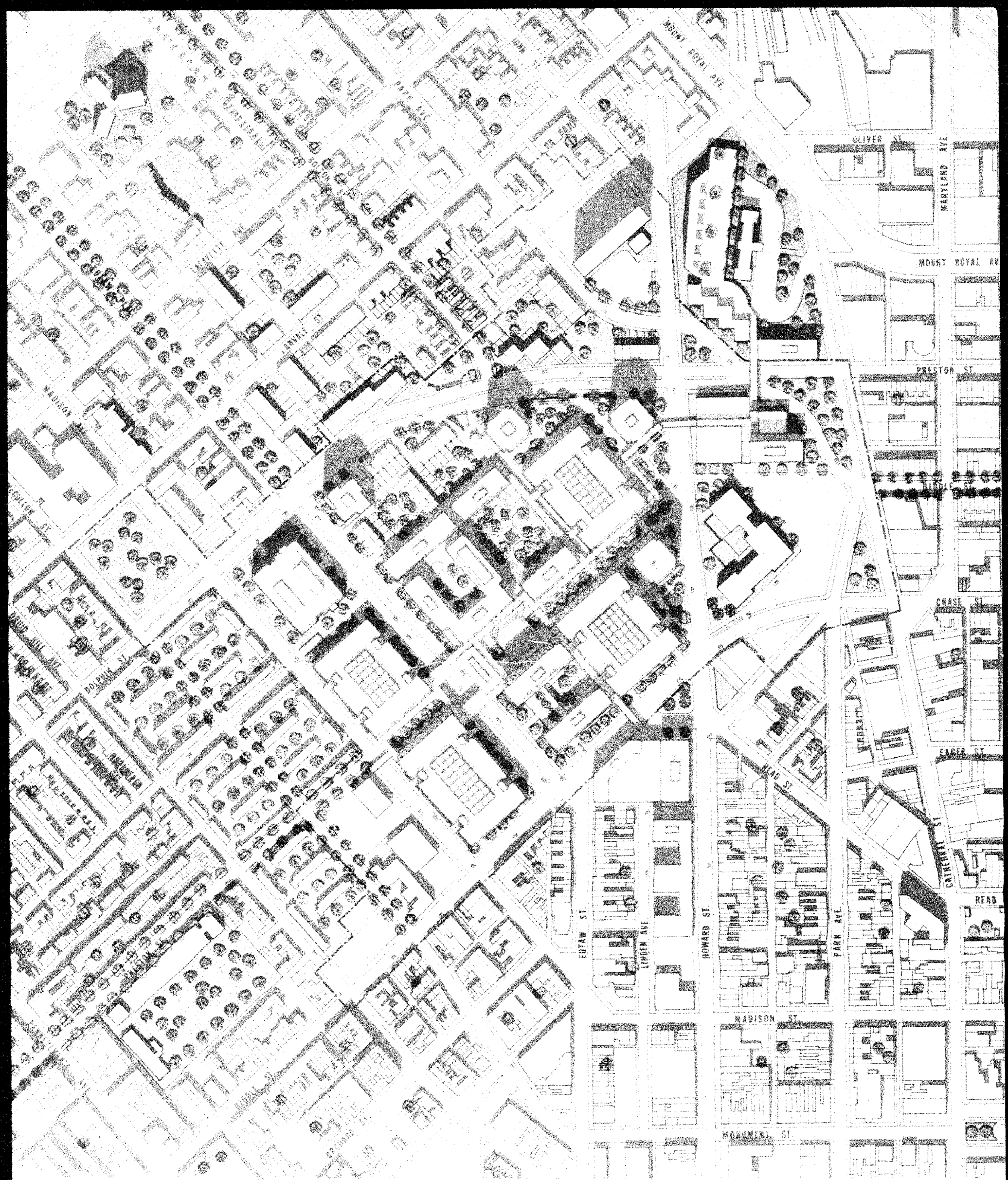
This plan illustrates how the expansion needs of the State can be met with a minimum of additional land acquisition. If ever the Fifth Regiment Armory were to phase out of operation, the state should develop this property (which it owns) as part of the long-range development scheme, acquiring from the City two small triangular pieces of land adjacent to the Armory, which the City now leases to the National Guard for parking space.

In order to relate to the residential communities around them, which consist of row houses three and four stories high, the government buildings must be kept to a compatible scale. The majority of the office blocks should rise no more than six to eight stories above the level of Dolphin Street. The Baltimore row house generally covers a high proportion of its lot, and fronts directly on the sidewalk, giving a sharply urban quality to the streetscape. The density of ground coverage and the intimate scale of the residential street should be extended within the site, giving the promenades and plazas a delightful sense of enclosure that, coupled with the soothing absence of cars, will make strolling, window-shopping, and outdoor pastimes a pleasure. The open areas in the complex are concentrated in small exterior plazas, and in the enclosed, but skylit and landscaped, courtyards of the quadrangles. The plazas and other outdoor facilities such as the ice-skating rink are all located along the paths of natural pedestrian movement.

The existing State buildings and a few slightly taller new towers can be absorbed into the complex by careful placement in relation to the overall plan and the existing institutional buildings in the vicinity. Every effort should be made to link the Center to these existing institutions and to take account of their expansion, and of new developments planned for this section of the city, to promote harmonious growth.

We recommend that the area at the corner of Eutaw and Dolphin Streets, opposite the Employment Security Building, eventually be redeveloped for housing, mainly in row houses with a single apartment tower. This development could be tied into the pedestrian system of the government complex, and would have the advantage of bringing residences back within the Urban Renewal Project area, and furthering the amalgamation of the Project into the community around it.

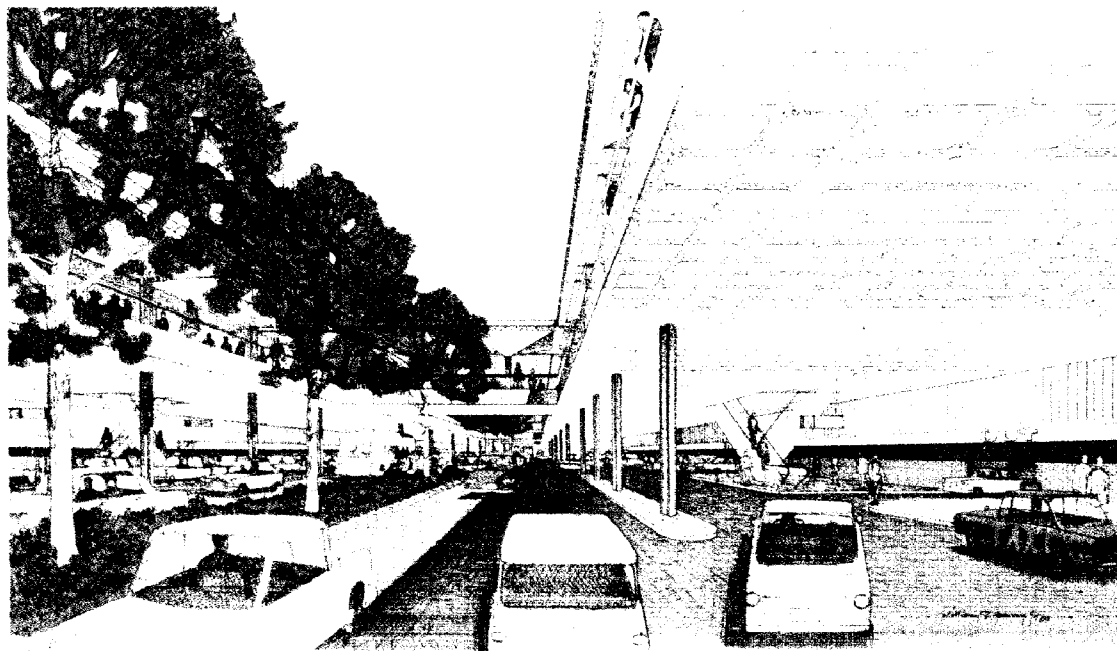
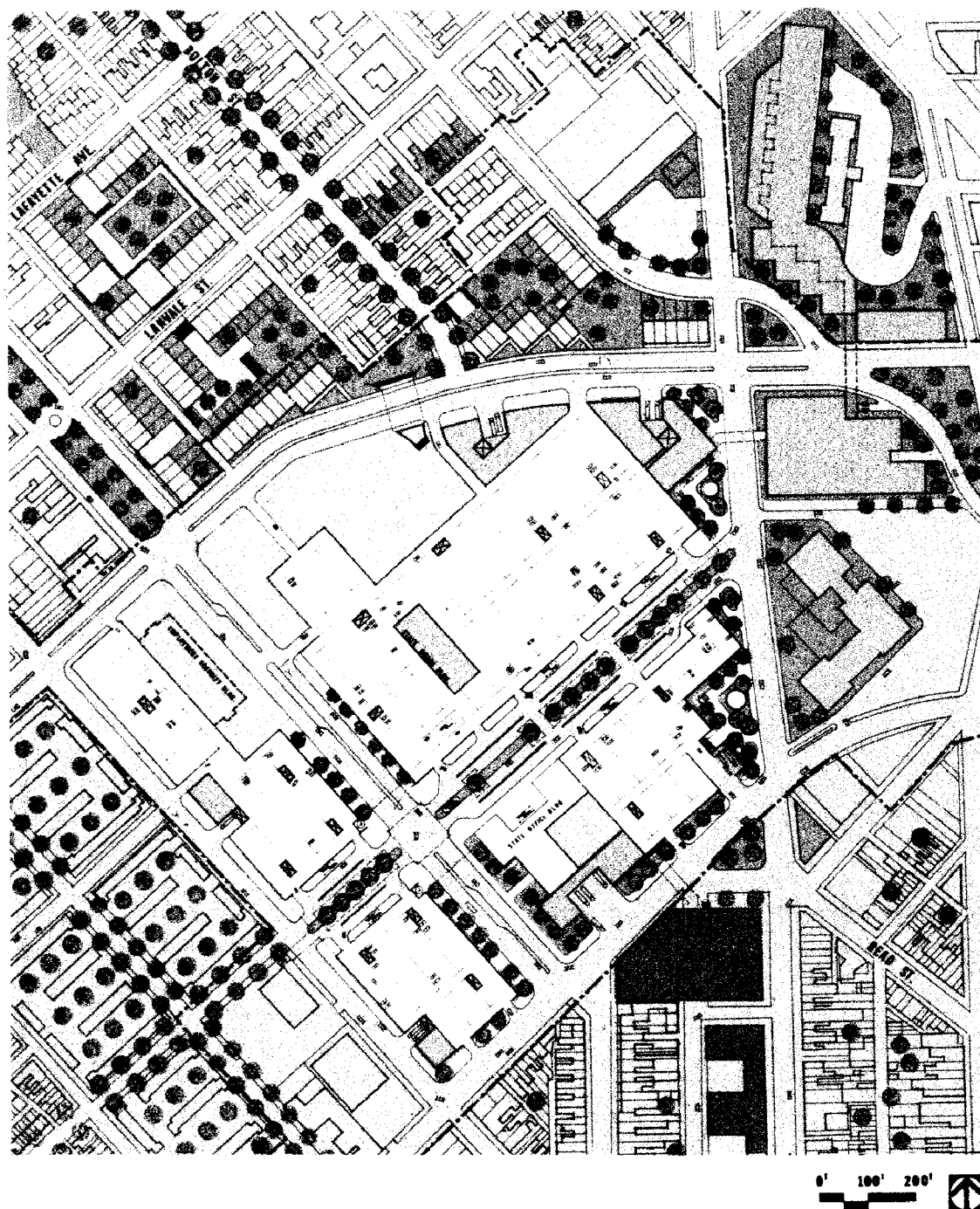




SITE PLAN



STREET LEVEL



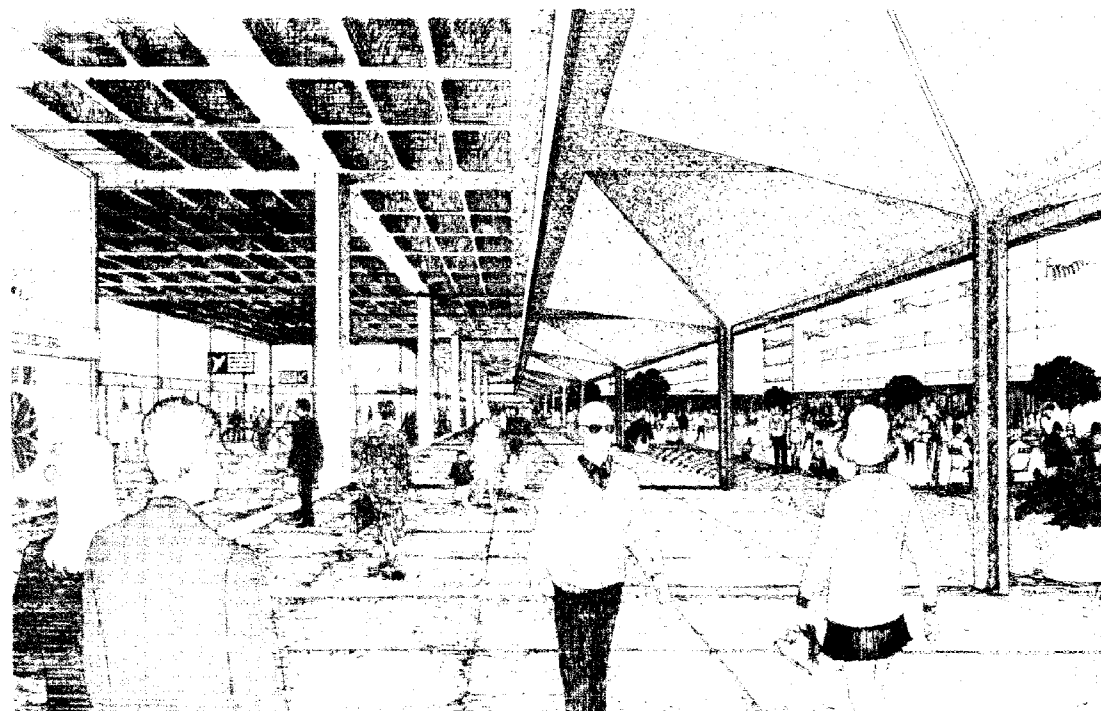
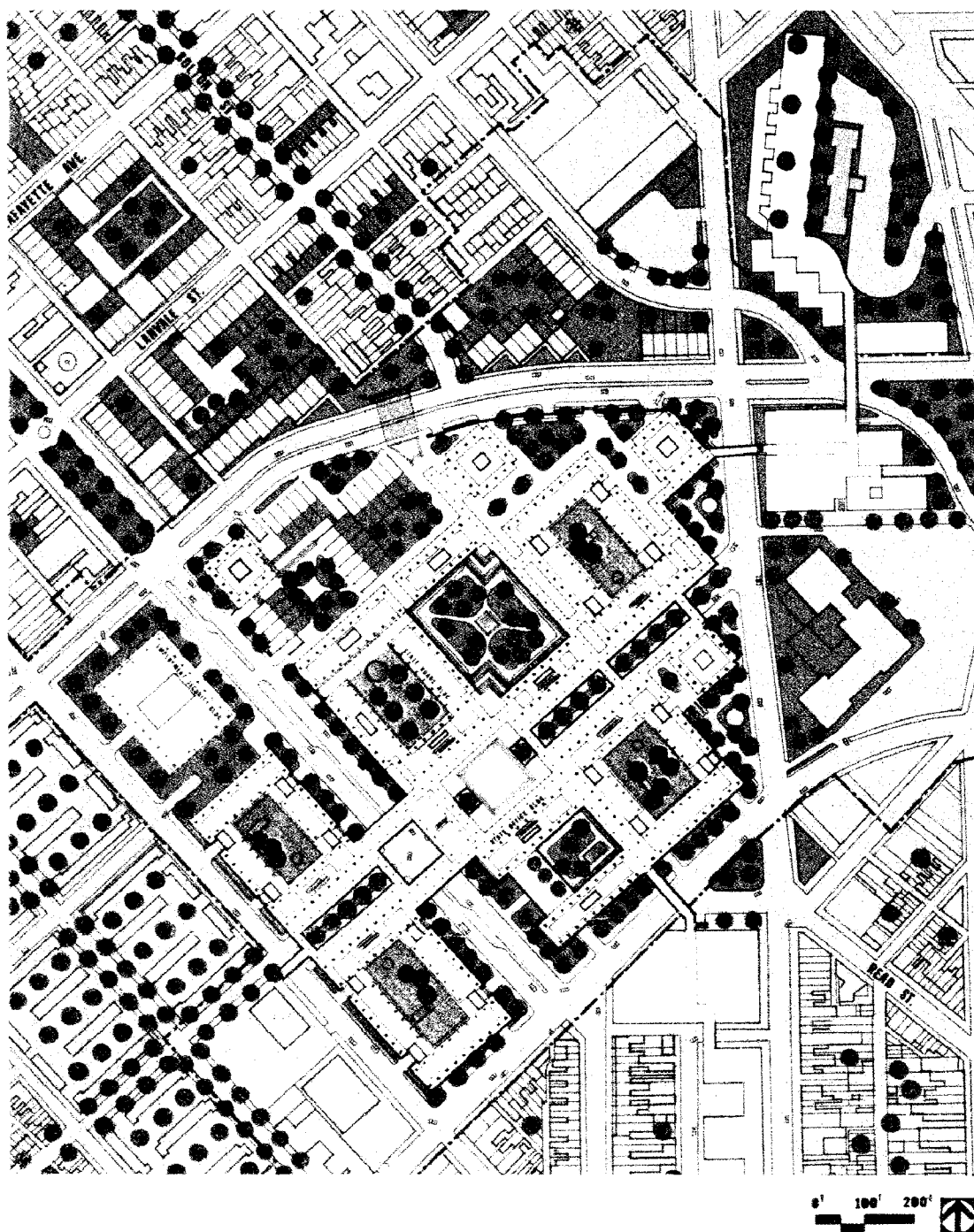
At ground level, Preston Street is developed as the ceremonial main access road for cars visiting the Center. The generous scale, with planted median strips, will lend this street a dignity suitable for the approach to government buildings. Two of the existing buildings and all the new quadrangles will be served by this street, with two moving lanes in each direction, flanked by drop-off lanes for unloading passengers from cars, taxis and busses. Each building will have waiting bays for taxis and busses, and an entrance and exit for its parking garage.

The parking level that opens off Preston Street will be reserved for visitors, officials, and other short-term parkers. Aside from giving the visitor a sense of the dignity of his mission, the ceremonial delivery direct to the escalator, and from the escalator direct to the reception area and the office he is looking for, has the logistical advantage of greatly reducing the chances of his getting lost.

Service facilities for the building and employees' parking facilities are both approached from the peripheral streets. Employees hurrying to their jobs drive direct from the street to their own parking levels, and ride direct from there in office-bound elevators. Thus the separation of movement by character continues inside the buildings, to the greater convenience of all concerned.

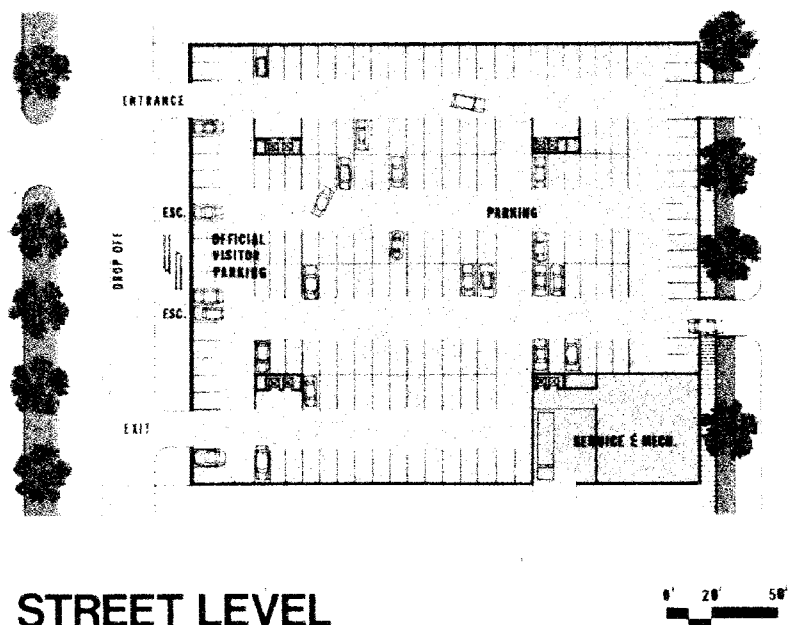
Traffic studies concerning the flow of cars to and from the complex from other parts of the city indicated that only minor adjustments would have to be made to the present and planned street systems in order to accommodate the extra flow of cars generated by the state complex, provided, that is, that the proposed rapid transit system is built.

PEDESTRIAN LEVEL

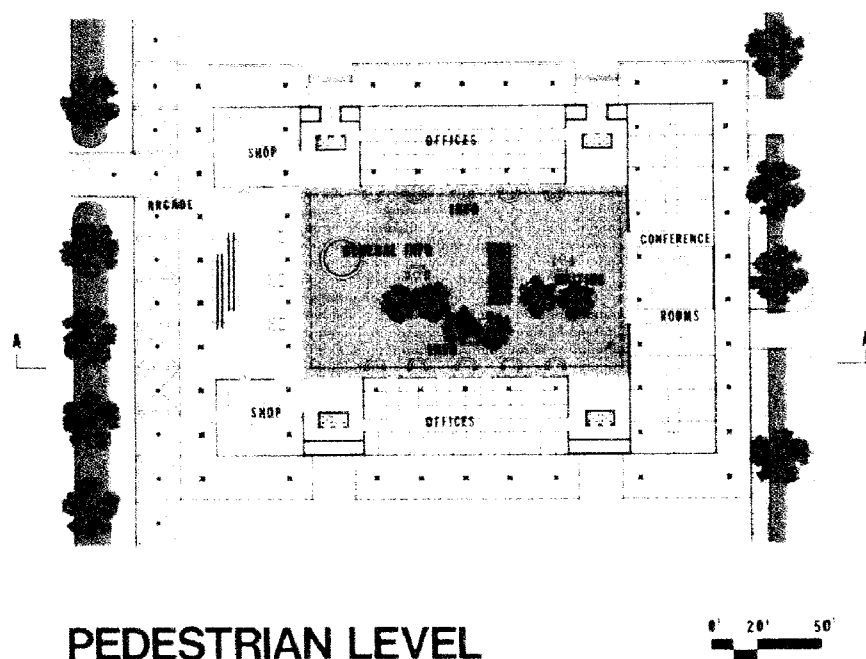


The elevated pedestrian level, planned to provide safe and pleasant access to all the buildings in the complex, will also serve for access to the proposed rapid transit line, and to contact points with the surrounding community. The walkway system should eventually be extended to bridge the peripheral streets and provide a direct physical link with the communities and major institutions on each side, enabling everyone to walk to the proposed rapid transit station without having to cross major streets. The main promenade built above Preston Street will be the point of access not only for all office buildings but also for the proposed rapid transit station. It therefore will draw the most pedestrian traffic, and is the logical site for location of commercial facilities that will attract people as they leave the subway. Service and specialty shops, and facilities like a cinema, restaurants, drug stores, even bowling alleys, should be encouraged, since they will have the effect of drawing people and lively activity into the area after the offices have closed. Accessible from the walkways there will be small parks and playgrounds, perhaps an ice-skating rink or a small outdoor amphitheater where civic ceremonies can be held. Such community facilities will provide amenities needed in the surrounding communities, and so will serve to knit the area together.

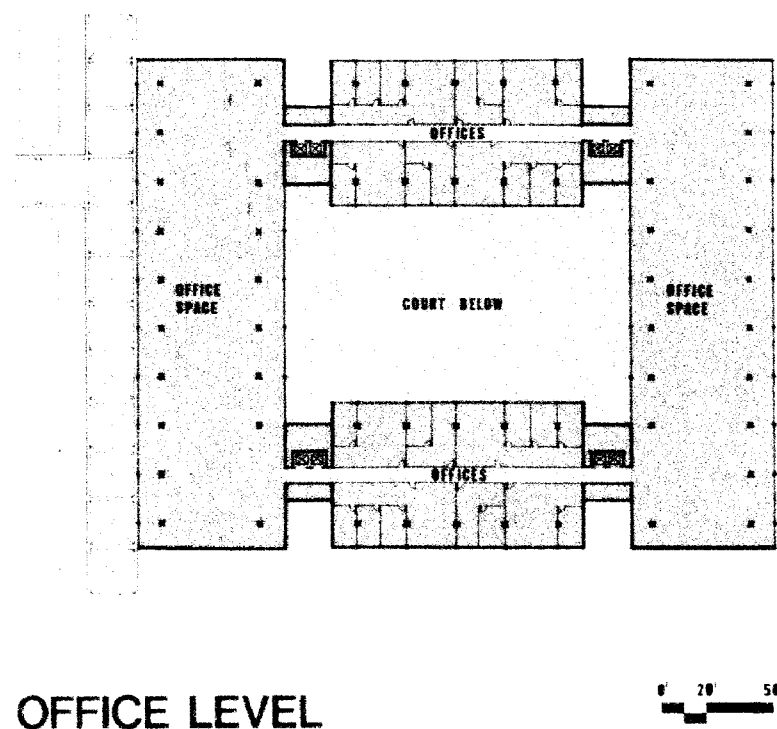
TYPICAL OFFICE QUADRANGLE



STREET LEVEL



PEDESTRIAN LEVEL



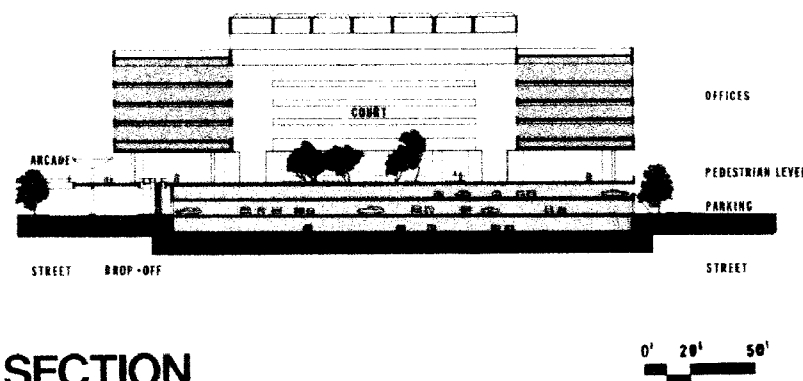
OFFICE LEVEL

These plans and sectional drawings show how a typical office block carry out the planning principles set forth on the other panels. This example, which is intended as a prototype, and not as a final design, demonstrates the advantages of the quadrangular plan. It serves the goal of flexibility of growth, for it can serve as a basic expansion unit, or/could even be built in segments, one side at a time. Thus, the governmental complex can increase organically, gradually, and economically, to meet variable demands in a flexible manner. A further source of flexibility is that such buildings can be built to varying heights, so long as they are in accordance with the overall development plan. Adherence to this plan and consistency in the use of building materials throughout the growth of the center will assure continued harmony of character for the entire complex.

The basic quadrangle consists of four building units grouped around a skylit, landscaped, climate-controlled courtyard, over a three-level parking garage. The vehicular level plan illustrates in detail the access system recommended in the concept plan, with visitor parking feeding in from Preston Street, employee parking from the periphery. It also shows the separate peripheral-street entrance for delivery and service trucks, with a loading platform and freight elevator.

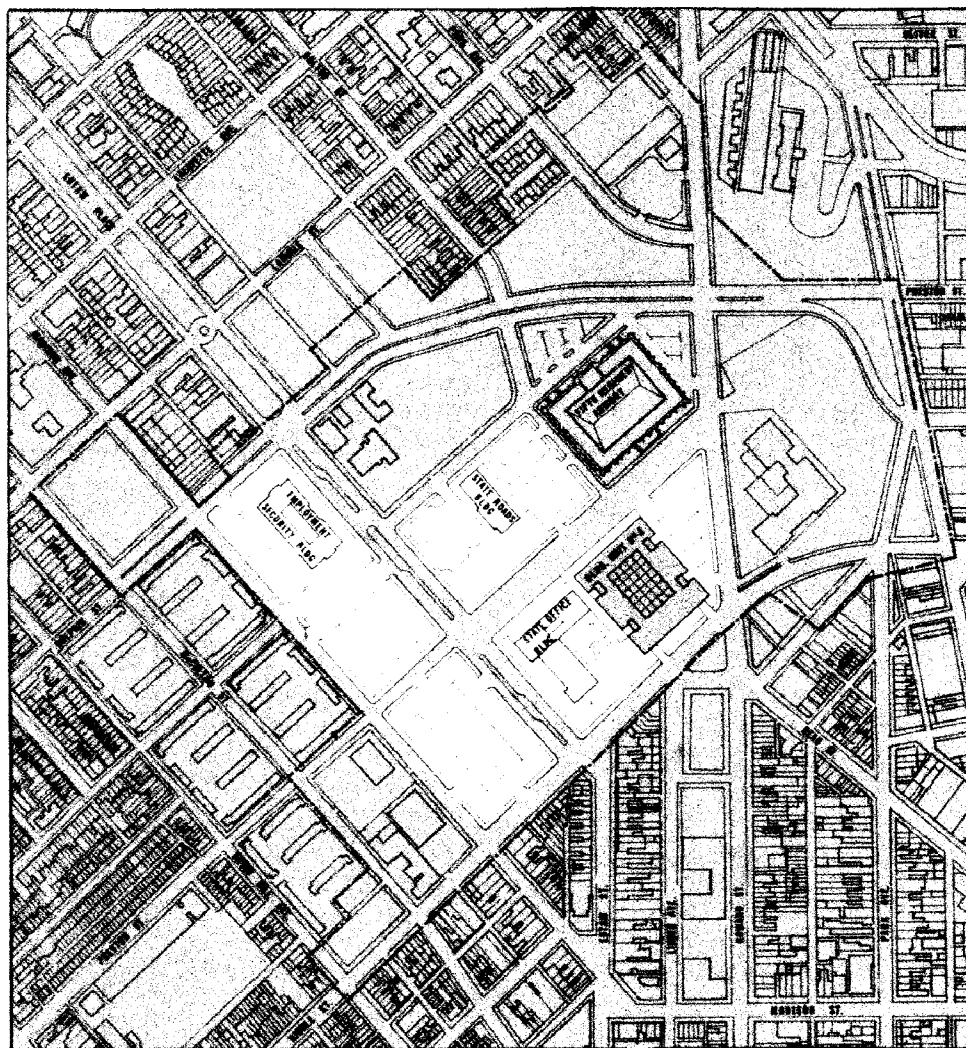
The pedestrian level plan illustrates the courtyard, the sheltered walkways, the escalator from the lower level, and the shops flanking the entry to the courtyard. The main entrance to each quadrangle will open into the courtyard from the Preston Street promenade. The courtyard functions as a combined reception and waiting room for the whole building, but particularly for those departments which have the greatest number of visitors. Such services are concentrated at the pedestrian level, so that the majority of visitors will find their needs met conveniently at hand, in offices surrounding the pleasant courtyard. The general reception desk near the main entry will direct the visitors to offices in other floors. Thus, ease of access is provided inside the building as well as outside. Also concentrated on this level, for the use of all agency personnel, and (where appropriate) of the public, are interdepartmental services and shared facilities such as meeting rooms, libraries, and auditoriums.

Layout of the upper levels of the office blocks allows for flexible subdivision according to the changing space needs of the agencies assigned to them.



SECTION

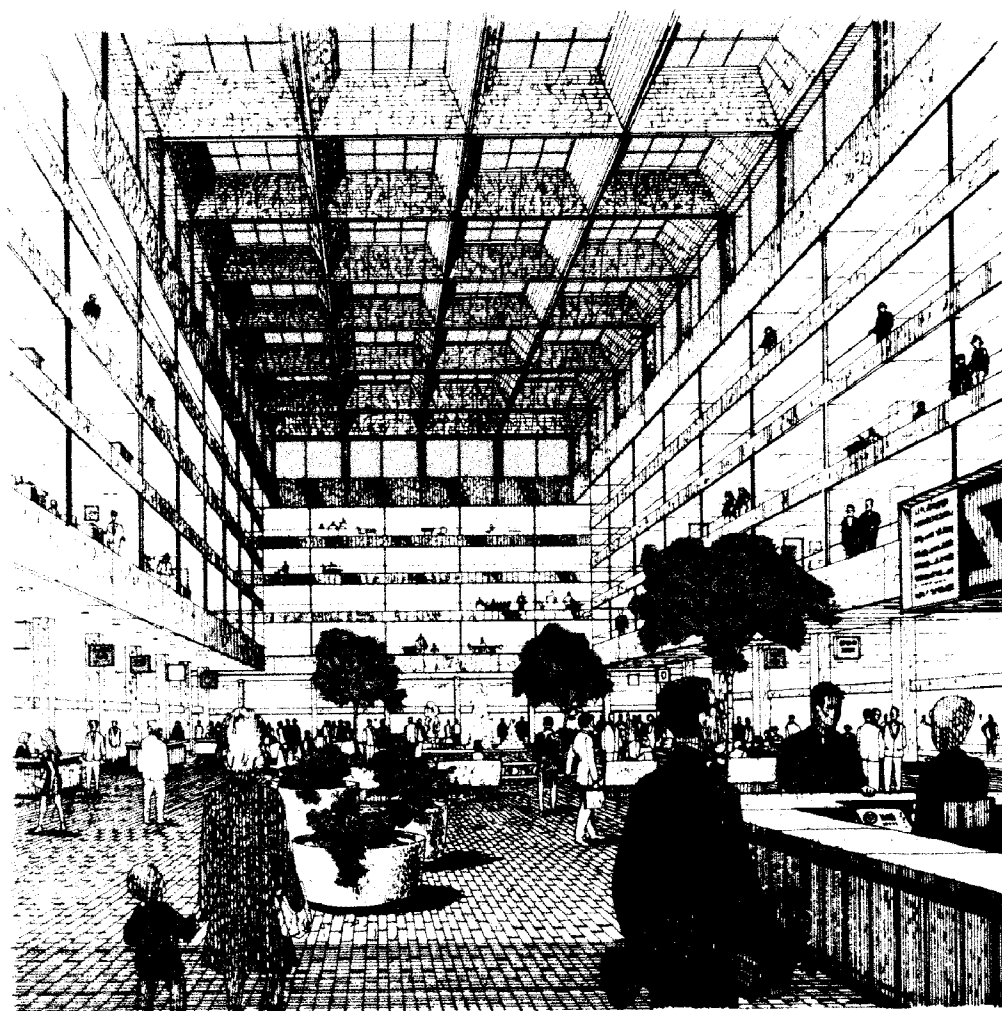
FIRST STAGE PLAN

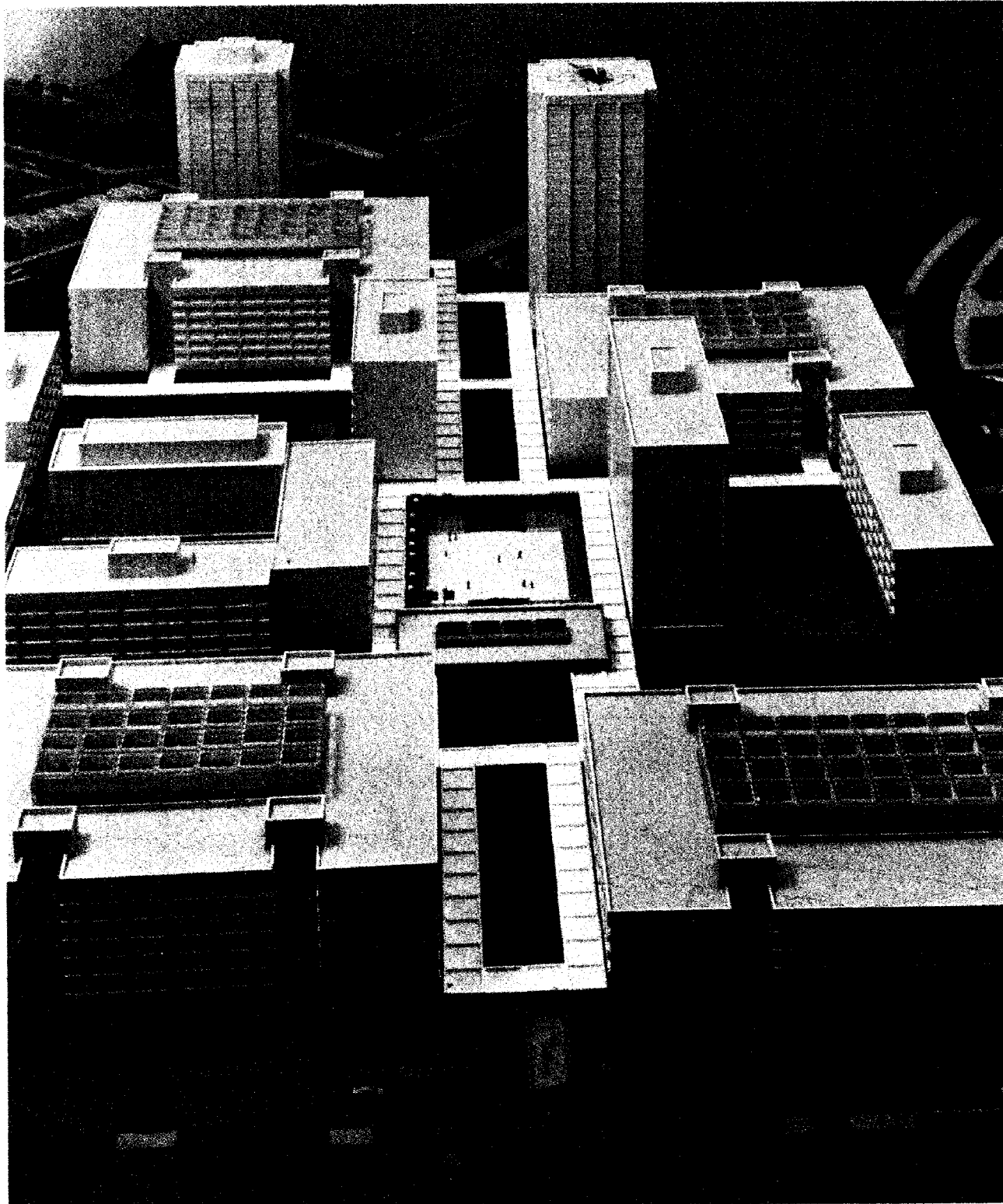


The first stage of expansion requested by the State is for 350,000 square feet of space, which necessitates, according to our calculations, 800 parking spaces. We recommend that this be built on the large landscaped area east of the fifteen-story State Office Building. This location was chosen so that no existing parking lots would be sacrificed during the first stage of construction. At this first stage, more parking than the office building itself will require should be built, in order to compensate for the loss of open parking spaces during construction of the following stages.

The expansion of the Center can be done in any number and size of stages, depending on the space need at the time. The very advantage of the proposed plan is that it provides this flexibility. The only qualifications are that each stage be self-sufficient, while conforming to the general architectural, planning, and landscaping guidelines that are adopted to ensure consistency of style and function in the developing complex.

Each unit must be equipped with reception and service space and adequate parking facilities, as well as being attached to the circulation networks which provide not only access but also unity to the whole complex. Each unit must have an external setting that is consistent with the overall style of the complex, even though in the case of partial quadrangles, this might involve temporary installation of amenities which would be reused elsewhere when the quadrangle was completed. In short, concern for the total ambience of the whole must guide the planning of each part of it.





CONCLUSION

This development plan affords the State of Maryland an opportunity to develop a governmental center unique in the country, and for that matter unique in the world. It is a center that does not stand aloof from its environment. It is an integral part of the community in which it stands. It is a center that has life after working hours because it contains facilities for shopping and amusement within its boundaries, so that it will attract activities in the evening.

It establishes one principle of particular significance in planning government establishments—that of concentrating at the most accessible level all departments that directly serve the public, pooling all waiting space, and reducing travel time for the visitors as well as the traffic within the building.

The plan also contributes to economy and efficiency of operation by centralizing at the most accessible level all interdepartmental services and facilities.

The use of the pedestrian platform has proved successful in uniting mixed CBD projects such as Charles Center in Baltimore. Its use at Mount Royal Plaza is the first instance in a governmental center, and facilitates the integration into the city fabric so anxiously sought for in the planning of large governmental installations. The development guidelines for this center could be profitably applied throughout the nation to government centers at any level - city, county, state, or federal.

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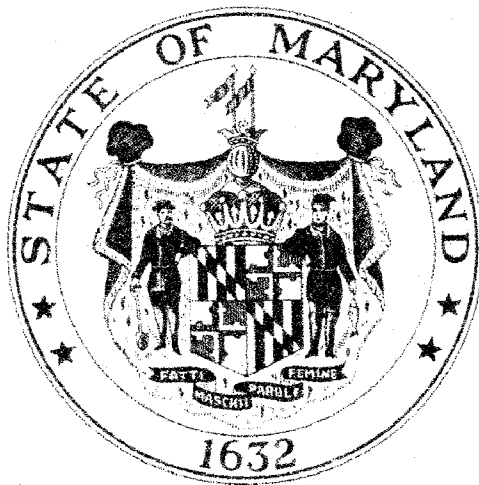
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